DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 317 497 SP 032 006

AUTHOR	Greer, Rita G.; Husk, William L.
TITLE	Recruiting Minorities into Teaching. Fastback 290.
INSTITUTION	Phi Delta Kappa Research Foundation, Bloomington, Ind.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-87367-290-9
PUB DATE	89
NOTE	39p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Phi Delta Kappa, P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402-0789 ($0.90, member $0.75).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Black Teachers; Elementary Secondary Education; *Minority Group Teachers; *School Community Relationship; *School Districts; *Teacher Recruitment

ABSTRACT

This "Fastback" presents an overview of the problem of recruiting minorities into teaching from a national perspective and describes the collaborative project in Louisville, Kentucky, that addresses the problem. This project involves close cooperation between the community, the school district, the university, and the teaching profession. The discussion concludes with a framework for recruiting minorities into teaching and offers recommendations for enhancing minority recruitment efforts in other school systems. (JD)

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FASTBACK

290

Recruiting Minorities into Teaching

Rita G. Greer, William L. Husk

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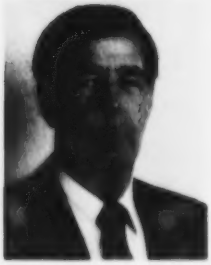

WILLIAM L. HUSK

Rita G. Greer, a personnel specialist for the Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky, is responsible for certified staffing of the district's 87 elementary and 13 special schools. Prior to entering personnel work, she was an administrative intern and coordinated the Minority Teacher Recruitment Project described in this fastback. A former teacher in grades 6 through 12, she has had extensive experiences in curriculum writing and program design and development. She has spoken throughout the nation on minority teacher recruitment issues. She received her doctorate from the University of Louisville in 1989.

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Series Editor, Derek L. Burleson

Recruiting Minorities into Teaching

by
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and
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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 89-61960
ISBN 0-87367-290-9
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Bloomington, Indiana

This fastback is sponsored by the Louisville Kentucky Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, which made a generous contribution toward publication costs.

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Introduction

The need to recruit more minorities into the teaching force is a major concern today. In response to this need, the Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, Kentucky, and the University of Louisville have developed a collaborative approach that serves both the school district and the university. In this fastback, we present an overview of the problem of recruiting minorities into teaching from a national perspective and then describe the collaborative project in Louisville, Kentucky, that was developed, and continues to be developed, to address this problem. We conclude with a framework for recruiting minorities into teaching and offer recommendations that might enhance minority recruitment efforts in other school systems.

Overview of the Problem

Who will teach America's youth in the coming decade? This is a question that has been asked frequently over the last few years by many educators, parents, government officials, and in various national education reform reports. Although there is disagreement over whether a real teacher shortage will materialize, educational leaders throughout the country agree that a massive shortage of minority teachers is imminent by the year 2000 unless some bold steps are taken to remedy the situation (Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession 1986).

The National Perspective

Using national projections, it is predicted that during the 1990s minority teachers will steadily decline to approximately 5% of the nation's teaching force. At the same time, the minority student population is expected to increase to a point where it constitutes a majority of the students in public schools in some states. (They already are a majority in many of our large cities.) In America, minorities include blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans, with blacks and Hispanics making up the largest proportion by far. Although there is concern about the overall minority teacher recruitment problem, our focus in this fastback will be on black teacher recruitment. Blacks are the largest minority in most of our urban areas, and they are the group with whom we have worked in our project in Louisville. Limit-

ing our discussion to black teacher recruitment is not to deny that equally serious problems exist with the Hispanic minority, which has the added dimension of bilingualism.

As Patricia Graham, dean of the Graduate School of Harvard University, points out:

> If the general demand for able, well-prepared, compassionate teachers is great, then the demand for able, well-prepared compassionate black teachers is acute. Blacks are declining rapidly as a percentage of the teaching force, even as black enrollment is rising. For blacks and non-blacks alike, it is important that we find and encourage blacks to become the able, well-prepared, compassionate teachers who will instruct our young for the benefit of us all. (1987, p. 605)

Status of Blacks in the Teaching Force

Over the past decade, many teacher training institutions flirted with the idea of closing their doors as enrollments in teacher preparation programs declined. Hardest hit were the historically black colleges, which traditionally have educated the largest proportion of black teachers in this country (Reed 1986; Witty 1987).

A study by Lyson (1983) showing the shift in the curriculum area emphasis of black students attending black and white land grant colleges from 1967 to 1977 was an early indication of the trend away from education as a primary career choice among blacks. Lyson's data indicate that the percentage of students awarded degrees in education by black land grant colleges declined by 18.5%, the largest change of all curriculum areas, and increased 15.1% in the social sciences and humanities and 10.6% in business. The percentage of degrees awarded in education to black students by white land grant colleges declined by only 0.1%, increased 5.3% in social sciences and humanities, and remained unchanged in business.

Trent (1984) reported that 14.5% of the degrees awarded black males in 1975-1976 were in education. By 1981-1982, that percentage had dropped to 10.5%. Similarly, 31.7% of the degrees awarded black fe-

males in 1975-1976 were in education but declined to 19% by 1981-1982. Furthermore, the number of black college freshmen expressing an interest in teaching as a career has declined. The American Council on Education (1987) reported that the percentage of high school graduates entering college between 1976 and 1985 who indicated education as their major field of study declined by nearly 50%. A large proportion of this decline is attributed to the number of blacks who no longer elect to become teachers.

There are several explanations as to why black students are not electing careers in education. Expanded employment opportunities for minorities and women is no doubt a primary factor in the waning interest of females and blacks in teaching. Changes over the past 20 years brought about by the civil rights movement, the women's movement, affirmative action policies, and other government interventions have broadened the career opportunities for minorities and women in American society. These initiatives have removed barriers and restrictions that once limited access and advancement in traditionally white, and often male-dominated, occupations. Thus, women and minorities increasingly began to pursue academic options that would make them marketable in a broader range of careers.

Darling-Hammond (1984), Sedlak and Schlossman (1986), Witty (1987), and others also note that at one time teaching was one of the few professional careers open to blacks. Currently, however, talented black college graduates are recruited by many businesses and professions, which offer salaries and working conditions that are much more attractive than those in teaching. These widening opportunities are not lost on high school students as they consider career options in college.

Teacher testing is reportedly another factor in the declining number of minorities entering teaching. As education reform efforts gathered momentum, there have been several initiatives to upgrade the nation's teaching force. Among these are testing for admission to teacher education programs, competency exams in basic skills, more

rigorous certification requirements, re-certification tests, and particularly the expanding use of the National Teacher Examination (NTE).

Whether it is the NTE or other certification tests, the pass rates of blacks have been disproportionately low (Smith 1987). For example, the federal Office of Education Research and Improvement (1987) reported that only 10% of those students graduating from black colleges in Louisiana who took the state's certification test passed. In Texas only 23% of the blacks who took the Pre-Professional Skills Test (an admissions test for teacher education) between March 1984 and March 1985 passed. Similarly, Florida, California, Mississippi, and several other states have reported that blacks and other minorities have problems passing state certification tests regardless of the type used. Clearly, testing appears to be having an adverse impact on the entry of blacks into the teaching pipeline.

Another reason for black students not choosing teaching as a career is the low status of the profession compared to other career options. Greer (1989) indicates that the increasing number of black college graduates as well as wider opportunities for blacks in a variety of career fields has created a new black middle class, which no longer views teaching as a way out of lower-class status. The Greer study also indicates that black teachers who have academically talented children are perceived by their children as disapproving of teaching as a career choice.

Witty (1987) indicates that expanded employment opportunities have allowed many black blue-collar workers to hold a number of jobs in business and industry that pay as much, if not more, as teaching. Also, with good incomes have come expanded travel opportunities, better housing in good neighborhoods, opportunities to participate in cultural and social events, ability to send their children to college, and many other things not possible in the past. In short, as access to middle-class opportunities has expanded, the choice of teaching as a means of upward mobility has declined.

A final factor is the steady decline in the percentage of blacks attending four-year colleges, thus reducing the pool for prospective

teachers. During the decade from 1976 to 1985, the percentage of black high school graduates entering college decreased from 33.5% to 26.1%, even though the percentage of black high school graduates continued to increase during this period (American Council on Education 1987). While black enrollment in four-year colleges has declined, blacks and other minorities constitute 32% of the enrollment in business or proprietary schools; and blacks alone constitute 19% of active duty military personnel. This raises the question as to whether blacks, during their high school years, are being tracked out of attending four-year-colleges altogether.

Keeping the national perspective in mind, let us turn now to the local scene in Jefferson County, Kentucky.

The Local Perspective

The situation in Jefferson County mirrors the national picture but has its own particular flavor because of the nature of the school district and the community within which it lies. In 1975-76 Jefferson County Public Schools underwent a court-ordered desegregation plan. The old Louisville Independent School District was merged with the county system. A large number of black teachers from the old Louisville system joined the new county system, resulting in approximately 20% of the new system's teaching force being black and 19% of the student population being black.

Over the next several years, as schools closed because of declining enrollments, the teaching force was reduced, and that 20% black teacher pool also began to decline. By the 1984-85 school year, black teachers represented only 16% of the teaching force. By 1984 student enrollment had begun to stabilize, but the demographics of the student population had changed; now 29% of the students were black. With normal attrition and an increase in retirements, it became apparent that there would be a need for additional teachers.

In 1984 Jefferson County Public Schools adopted a voluntary desegregation plan, which provided several guarantees to the black

community. The district established a new position, assistant superintendent of human resources. Also, the district made a commitment to actively recruit and promote more blacks into the administrative ranks and to strive to maintain parity within its black teacher ranks. The district gave high priority to making the percentage of black teachers equal to the percentage of blacks in the general workforce in the area, with the ultimate goal of increasing the percentage of black teachers to parity with the percentage of black students in the district.

A cursory examination of the black applicant pool, including the number of black teacher education majors expected to graduate from nearby institutions in the next several years, indicated that the district's plan was doomed before it started. Reflecting the national picture, the situation bordered on hopeless. Something had to be done. But what? Our solution in Jefferson County was a "grow your own" approach called the Minority Teacher Recruitment Project.

The Minority Teacher Recruitment Project

The Minority Teacher Recruitment Project (MTRP) was developed by the Jefferson County Public Schools and the University of Louisville as a cooperative effort to recruit more black teachers and black teacher education students. The project began in the fall of 1985, although preliminary planning had been ongoing since the summer of 1984. MTRP was conceived by Joseph P. Atkins, assistant superintendent of human resources for Jefferson County Public Schools, and William Husk, a professor in the secondary education department at the University of Louisville.

The project sprang from the district's need to increase its black teacher population and the university's need to increase black enrollment in its teacher education program. The district's declining minority teaching force had reached a point of crisis in the eyes of the project founders, the superintendent, the school board, and sectors of the black community. All agreed that it was a time for action. The goal was to increase the percentage of black teachers to approximate the black student population, now approaching 30%.

The university's commitment to minorities had evolved over the years. Recruiting more minorities into senior divisions of all its colleges was seen as essential to the overall mission of an urban university. For the School of Education, in particular, a primary thrust was to increase involvement with the public schools and with public school educators. Thus by increasing the number of blacks enrolled in the

School of Education, the university would be able to achieve two of its primary objectives. Out of these complementary needs grew the collaborative venture known as the Minority Teacher Recruitment Project.

The staff for the project consisted of a four-member team: the coordinator (a district teacher promoted to administrative intern with the responsibility of coordinating the project); a professor from the University of Louisville's School of Education; the assistant superintendent of human resources for the Jefferson County Public Schools; and the executive director of the Jefferson County Public Schools/ Gheens Academy, the professional development arm of the school district.

The Post High School Participant Program

The immediacy of the problem influenced the direction that the project took. It was agreed that our first efforts should provide a "quick return," that is, identifying and recruiting participants who could acquire certification quickly. To that end, the Post High School Participant Program (PHSPP) became phase one of the project. Its goal was to attract high school graduates who had indicated an interest in teaching as a career and a willingness to pursue the coursework needed for certification. Those approached about participating in the project included Jefferson County teacher aides and other nonprofessional employees of the school district and the University of Louisville, substitute teachers, persons in the community who held degrees in teacher certifiable areas, persons enrolled in associate degree programs at Jefferson Community College, persons who had at one time been certified but whose certification had expired, and those who were certified in areas of surplus and thus unable to find a teaching position.

The design and development of the PHSPP employed a cooperative planning strategy. While the project team had anticipated many of the needs of the group to be served, it went to the first meeting of its 18 participants with an open agenda, preferring instead to listen for some direction from the group. Since this was the district's and the university's first effort in such a venture, and the literature was not reporting other models that could offer much direction, the

project team was not uneasy that it did not have all the answers. Our decision to listen paid off.

This first group of participants not only provided direction for the project but gave us insight into several issues, the resolution of which was crucial to the success of the project. First, although limited funding was available for the project, the need for financial aid was stressed. Second, the backgrounds of the group ranged from high school graduates with no college experience to those with college degrees but no teacher certification. We quickly realized that a variety of services would be needed if PHSPP was to be successful. Third, we realized that the small project staff was insufficient to meet the needs of the initial group of 18, let alone if additional participants were recruited. Clearly more human resources would be needed.

After our initial meeting, planning and program design took on a different character. While the attitude of "we can make a difference" prevailed, our approach changed from being "missionaries" to being "brokers." As a broker of services, the project team began scouting the school district, the university, and the community to identify services that were already in place that our participants could plug into rather than trying to create those services from scratch, which would have been impossible given our limited funding and small staff.

PHSPP does not provide scholarships, grants, or loans for its participants. However, there are built-in inducements that propel the program, as the comment from one participant reflects:

> As one of the original 18, I came to the program when it was developing. We didn't know what was going to be the final outcome or what the program was going to actually be about, other than it would help us get our certification. The one thing that I remember vividly is the coordinator saying, "We will succeed!" That attitude prevailed throughout the program. I needed to be reassured and I needed to be pushed!

High but realistic expectations, attention to individual needs, and an ongoing support system are the pillars on which PHSPP is built.

Those high expectations include a shared understanding by participants and the project staff as to what the program can and cannot do, what the participants' commitment of time are, and what costs are involved.

Attention to individual needs begins with the development of a plan for certification based on the School of Education's guidelines. The project staff then develops with the participants a plan for scheduling courses and course sequences, selecting professors, selecting optional courses depending on the participant's strengths and weaknesses, and setting a timetable for coursework completion. Additionally, a testing schedule is established, which includes test-taking skills workshops, a projected date for completing the teacher education entry test requirement, and projected dates for taking the National Teacher Examination. When completed, the plan covers a sequence of both short-term and long-term benchmarks toward teacher certification.

The project staff also attends to other needs of the participants, including securing employment, without which many would not be able to continue in the program. The school district has allocated a number of its teacher aide positions for project participants. Also, project participants are given first opportunity at substitute teaching positions and other part-time positions for which they are qualified. When employment needs are identified, efforts to accommodate those needs are coordinated with the school district's Department of Personnel Services.

Last, the project's support system includes Saturday School – three- to six-hour workshops scheduled on Saturdays that address areas of personal development, pre-professional development, and professional development. Workshop topics covered include adults going back to school, test-taking skills, college writing, dressing for success, resumé writing, and interviewing skills.

Facilitators who conduct the workshops are aware of and sensitive to the unique nature of the post high school participant group – non-traditional students ranging in age from 19 to 54, the majority of whom are female, single heads of households whose formal education ranges

from no college to a Master's degree, and who more than likely have experienced some hardships associated with acquiring whatever education they have attained.

Other support services include a textbook exchange and loan program among participants, thus reducing the added expense of buying books; the "Friends of Education" program, where participants are paired with a university, school district, or community mentor for personal and/or academic guidance; and the "Peer Pals" program, which pairs participants who are at a similar point in their program and can be scheduled into many of the same classes, thus reducing the isolation participants may feel. Also, peer tutoring and mentoring among the participants are encouraged and facilitated.

For the project staff, seeing older, nontraditional students grow and develop into competent and confident professionals is one of the rewards of working in the program. There were, however, several problems that we had to work through. For example, because many of the participants had been out of school for a number of years, some of their skills, particularly in math, were "rusty." They experienced difficulty with the mathematics section of the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), the teacher education entry test required by the state. In researching the problem, we discovered that the older females had taken only two math classes during their high school years, and participants in general had not taken high school math courses beyond Algebra II. Only a small percentage of the group had college-level math courses on their transcripts.

To address the lack of math proficiency, the project team requested that incoming participants take the mathematics placement test available at the university. The project then hired a high school mathematics teacher as a consultant to provide ongoing math tutoring services for those who needed it. Additionally, this teacher periodically provided review workshops on such topics as "Reviewing Fractions." Also, we conducted a concentrated math review for the CTBS in the weeks preceding the administration of the test.

Another problem we encountered involved the transfer of credits from the local junior college to the University of Louisville. Many of the junior college students were enrolled in programs that offered a specific degee, such as Associate of Arts in Early Childhood Education. Although the coursework taken could be applied to the bachelor's degree program offered at the University of Kentucky, the course requirements did not correspond to the University of Louisville's certification requirements. Consequently, participants sometimes lost as many as 30 credit hours when they transferred.

By working with the various junior college departments and with the student advising center, we were able to identify students who later planned to enroll in the School of Education at the University of Louisville. Those students were advised of the university's course requirements and were scheduled into only those courses that would transfer to the university. In addition, students who wanted an associate degree were advised to enroll in Associate of Arts or Associate of Science programs offering basic liberal arts requirements, rather than in terminal degree programs, which require specialty courses.

Furthermore, the time constraints imposed by full-time employment, raising a family, and attending school presented juggling problems for the participants and the project staff. Getting participants to accept that they need not be the "super mom, super spouse, super student" was sometimes difficult. One of our roles was convincing participants that going back to school should be a family project and that they should ask for help with household chores from children, spouse, and other family members. Once participants realized that it was okay to ask for help, it was smooth sailing for the majority. Peer counseling, strong networking between participants, as well as assistance from the Friends of Education group all helped participants to cope with personal problems. Also, our Saturday morning workshops provided time for needed "therapy" and a chance to exchange "war stories."

In summary, the Post High School Participant Program has developed into an array of services to meet individual needs. Since the

inception of PHSPP in 1985, we have received more than 600 inquiries about the program and identified 236 individuals who are willing to pursue coursework needed for teacher certification. As of June 1989, PHSPP has produced 39 certified graduates. Currently, 115 participants are enrolled in a local college or university taking courses needed for certification. The following remarks from a PHSPP participant capture the essence of the program:

> The Post High School Participant Program provides the stimulus, direction, and support that many of us need. What the program actually does goes far beyond what is visible to outsiders simply looking at the program. The feelings of self-worth, the restoration of self-confidence, and the knowledge that someone really cares enough to help us succeed doesn't come across on paper, but is there in the people who work with us. All of the services in the world wouldn't make a bit of difference if we didn't believe that we can do it!

The High School Teacher Mentor Program

The second phase of the Minority Teacher Recruitment Project was to generate interest in teaching as a career among high school students. The project staff envisioned the High School Teacher Mentor Program (HSTMP) as part of a long-range, "grow your own" solution to the minority teacher recruitment problem. Initially, our approach was to resurrect the old Future Teachers of America approach with the establishment of clubs in all 21 high schools in the district. However, it didn't take us long to realize that a major overhaul of the club concept was in order for dealing with today's students.

Learning from our experiences with the Post High School Participant Program and working in concert with the district's goal of providing opportunities for teachers to demonstrate and develop their leadership potential, the project staff saw HSTMP as another cooperative planning effort, which could capitalize on the individual talents of all the mentors.

Planning for HSTMP began in the spring of 1986 with the identification of teachers who were willing to take on the added responsibility as "mentors" for the teacher/mentor program. Ways of identifying the teacher/mentors included self-nomination, recommendation by the building principal, or recommendations from two colleagues; also, mentors must have demonstrated a personal commitment to education as a profession. Teacher/mentors recruit, counsel, and nurture their future teacher candidates. They do not receive extra planning time or a reduced course load for working with HSTMP. Rather, the

"club" is considered an extracurricular activity for which teacher/mentors receive additional compensation.

After identifying the teacher/mentors, we began by giving them a national perspective on the minority teacher shortage and then focused on the problem as it affected the Jefferson County Public Schools. After much discussion about the problem and about the need for quality education for both black and white students, the mentors were ready to join with the project coordinator in planning a program for each participating high school.

The planning included drafting a statement of goals and objectives and identifying activities that would be appropriate for high school students. When the HSTMP program began, juniors and seniors were given first priority. However, we soon realized that we should concentrate our recruitment efforts on freshmen and sophomores. Including this younger group was incorporated into our revised project design. It was agreed that planning should be flexible to account for differences in the structure and culture of the participating high schools. The individual high school plans had some things in common; but each had different activities, reflecting the talents and interests of the individual teacher/mentors.

Among the many activities were Parent Night, financial aid workshops, ACT/SAT preparatory workshops, peer-tutoring programs, leadership skill workshops, overnight college visitations, adopt-a-school programs providing HSTMP students with opportunities to tutor pupils in selected elementary schools, and adopt-a-class programs pairing HSTMP students with a class in which they serve as big sisters or big brothers and conduct special activities with the class. High school students are able to do one-on-one activities with their elementary students or work as a team to present special programs and mini-lessons. Individual school plans also include such activities as attending school board meetings, attending lectures by outstanding educators, reading selected journal articles, and doing research on outstanding local and national educators.

Coordinated activities for the HSTMP group as a whole include out-of-county college tours, the biannual Student Symposium at which two representatives from each school meet to discuss issues relevant to minority teacher recruitment, and the annual HSTMP Future Educators Conference held in the spring of each year. HSTMP is governed by an elected districtwide student executive board, which publishes a newsletter highlighting various events from the clubs in each high school.

Teacher/mentors have expressed a desire to incorporate the HSTMP into the regular curriculum offerings as perhaps a junior- or senior-level elective. Although this idea is being entertained, it conflicts with our research, which indicates that grade 10 is the ideal time to capture the interest of youth in teaching as a career, especially black males (Greer 1989).

To what extent this program is a success is yet to be determined. In the eyes of the project team and the teacher/mentors, the program has achieved its primary goal of getting black high school students to consider teaching as a career choice. More than 300 students have attended each of the two Future Educators Conferences held to date. It is too early to tell how many of these students will eventually become teachers. However, nearly 150 graduating seniors have expressed an interest in education as a major or minor and have enrolled in colleges and universities throughout the state and nation. The following comment from a teacher/mentor captures one measure of success:

> We are under no illusion that we have captured them all. We do know, however, that for those who do not go into education, their feelings and respect for teachers and teaching will be lasting. Twenty years from now when they are burnt out with engineering, accounting, and communications, that next logical second career choice could be teaching. The seeds will have been planted with the High School Teacher Mentor Program.

The Middle School Teaching Awareness Program

The Middle School Teaching Awareness Program (MSTAP) is the latest development in our Minority Teacher Recruitment Project. This program currently is being piloted as part of the career exploration curriculum in 12 of the 23 Jefferson County middle schools. The planning phase began with six schools during the spring of 1988. By March 1989, 12 middle schools had implemented some MSTAP activities. Full implementation is expected by 1990.

In planning the MSTAP, we used the same cooperative approach that had proved successful with the post high school and high school programs. Working with the district's director of counseling services, the project coordinator contacted middle school principals and counselors to recruit volunteers for the pilot phase of the program. As part of the orientation for the teacher and counselor volunteers who expressed enthusiasm and interest in implementing the pilot program, we presented general information on the shortage of minority teachers and specific information on the Jefferson County Minority Teacher Recruitment Project.

Our objectives for the MSTAP were: 1) to make sure that teaching was included in the career exploration phase of the eighth-grade curriculum, 2) to help students understand the positive aspects of teaching as a career, 3) to make students more knowledgeable about the variety of careers available in education, and 4) to make students aware of the implications resulting from a shortage of minority teachers.

MSTAP is seen not as an add-on but rather as an integrated part of the middle school career exploration curriculum.

Teachers and counselors from the pilot schools worked with the project coordinator to develop resource packets that serve as springboards for classroom activities. The packets are available to teaching teams in each school, who decide exactly how they will be used in the curriculum. In addition, the building principals and other teachers provided support as the program moved from its development stage to implementation. One of the ways principals and teachers helped was an opening activity the first day of school in which they explained why they chose education as a career.

A variety of career awareness activities has been spawned as a result of the MSTAP. They include discussions, debates, film analyses, speakers, career fair booths, career bulletin boards, mini-lessons, role playing, essay writing, peer tutoring, fringe benefit comparisons, career board games, chart and poster making, and small-group conferences. The emphasis is on providing accurate information and positive models, which serve to counteract many students' stereotypical and often negative views about teaching.

As MSTAP evolves, designated counselors in each middle school will conference with eighth-grade minority students and give them information about the High School Teacher Mentor Program in the high schools they will be attending. The counselors will submit the names of those who show an interest in teaching as a career to the appropriate high school teacher/mentor. Also, high school teacher/mentors may elect to meet with groups of eighth-graders at their feeder schools to discuss the HSTMP.

In assessing MSTAP to date, we recognize that many minority students with the potential for becoming teachers may be functioning at a marginal level academically during their middle school years. Therefore, it is essential that we do everything possible to encourage academic progress. Getting parents more involved is important. Also, it is important to get middle school students to automatically think

"college" when they hear "future." Some of our planning to deal with these concerns includes workshops for parents of minority students as well as other interested parents; summer enrichment programs in residence on college campuses; and skill development in communication, speech, and computers at summer camps.

Over the next two years, refinement and expansion of the career awareness program will include: 1) implementation of the program in all middle schools, 2) expansion of MSTAP to all grades in the middle school, 3) strengthening collaboration between high school teacher/mentors and middle school counselors, 4) development of parent resource groups as one of the support services for each middle school, 5) identification and development of career resource material for middle-grade students, and 6) further development of school-based academic support strategies.

The Collaborative Approach to Minority Teacher Recruitment: A Framework for Planning

After four years of development, we consider the Jefferson County Minority Teacher Recruitment Project to be a promising approach to the problem of the diminishing number of minorities in the teaching profession. It began as a collaborative effort between the University of Louisville and the Jefferson County Public Schools. We started the program with only one coordinator, a public school teacher who was also pursuing doctoral studies. The coordinator's salary is paid by the Jefferson County Public Schools, and she reports directly to the assistant superintendent of human resources. Currently the program requires funding for the coordinator, 25 teacher/mentors, two graduate assistants, and three work/study students. The cost is shared by the school district and the university. As the program has extended its collaborative links, other sources have contributed both human resources and capital.

The Jefferson County experience is only one approach to recruiting more minorities into teaching. Other new and creative approaches will be needed if the problem is to be resolved. For those who want to initiate minority recruitment programs in their own communities, we offer a framework in this chapter, which should help in planning and implementing a program.

Our experience with the Minority Teacher Recruitment Project in Jefferson County has affirmed our belief that a collaborative approach is the best way to address the minority teacher shortage. The natural

partners in this collaborative effort are 1) the community, 2) the school district, 3) the university, and 4) the teaching profession. Each of these partners brings unique resources to the task; each controls a piece of the "turf"; and each interacts with the others. Let us examine the role of each of these partners.

The Role of the Community

Although not traditionally involved in teacher recruitment, the community can, in fact, play a key role in identifying prospective minority teachers, in providing a support network, and in offering financial assistance. Various community organizations, such as the Urban League, NAACP, and minority social fraternities and sororities, can help in identifying minority residents in the community who are interested in teaching.

At the same time, these organizations can provide the individuals who become the core of "Friends of Education," the network of supporters who serve as mentors, tutors, and confidants for the prospective teachers. When extended to include retired teachers, currently employed teachers, and others, this network of "friends" also serves as grassroots recruiters by sharing information and referring prospects directly to the program.

Additionally, individuals and organizations in the community can provide financial assistance in the form of scholarships, grants, or loans. Adopting a future teacher and providing tuition assistance or allowing program participants to work flexible schedules are other ways that the community can support the minority teacher recruitment effort.

The Role of the School District

Obviously, school districts stand to gain a great deal from collaborative efforts to recruit minorities, because they desperately need minority teachers. Even though school districts may have limited financial resources, they can make vital contributions to the recruitment effort.

School districts can help by encouraging teacher aides, substitutes, and other noncertified personnel to obtain certification. By creating a staff position in the personnel department devoted primarily to recruiting minorities, the district demonstrates its commitment to address the problem. The same staff position might be responsible for coordinating a project similar to the one in Jefferson County. Also, by reserving a portion of its noncertified staff positions for program participants and by making summer employment available to them, the district can provide meaningful work experiences for prospective teachers.

In cooperation with the university, the teachers association, and the state certification agency, the school district can help determine certification requirements and guarantee employment to all participants who meet those requirements. Further, as the district cooperates with the university in providing student teacher placements, it can identify outstanding minority teachers in the district and invite them to serve as cooperating teachers, thus providing strong minority role models for the student teachers.

Taking a longer view, the district can foster interest in teaching among its own students by making the working atmosphere of its teachers professionally enriching. When classroom teachers demonstrate positive attitudes about what they are doing, those attitudes are transmitted to their students. Teachers feeling good about themselves and their profession are the best means of counteracting the perception among some students that teachers do not like what they are doing.

The Role of the University

In addition to carrying out its major responsibility for teacher education, the university can play a key role by counseling minority students in such areas as evaluating their past academic and work experience and planning a course of study. Further, the university can be flexible by offering courses at times that take into account

family and job responsibilities, by giving consideration to work experience for practicum observation credit, and by offering transition classes for persons coming from junior colleges or for persons who have been away from the academic environment for several years.

Financial aid is a powerful inducement the university can use to attract prospective minority teachers. Whether set-aside funds or general scholarship monies are provided, it is critical that the availability of these funds be made known to minority students interested in teaching. Scholarships, grants, and loans may be the incentive that makes the difference in whether a minority student chooses teaching rather than engineering or business administration as a career.

The university can demonstrate its commitment to recruitment of minorities by participating in career fairs, by offering summer programs for minority youth, and by hiring more minority faculty and staff. Through collaboration with a school district, university faculty can become meaningfully involved in the professional lives of teachers and other educators. All of these activities can lead to modifications in the university's teacher education programs in ways that will prepare all students to teach in multi-ethnic classrooms.

The Role of the Teaching Profession

Teachers are highly visible role models to students thinking about a career in education. Whether participating in a career-day program or simply interacting with students on a daily basis, teachers are in an ideal position to identify, encourage, and recruit others to the teaching profession. Teachers' collective efforts to identify and recruit minority teaching candidates at the local level could be the catalyst for similar efforts at state and national levels. Local teacher organizations might "adopt" minority students who indicate an interest in teaching by offering them scholarships. They also might encourage members to join support groups like Jefferson County's "Friends of Education."

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Putting It All Together

Throughout the foregoing discussion on the resources and contributions of the four partners in the collaborative effort to recruit minorities into teaching, the words "can" and "might" appear frequently, indicating tremendous potential. In order to realize this potential, a fifth partner is necessary: the coordinating staff, the people who design and carry out the collaborative minority teacher recruitment model.

The size of the staff will be determined by 1) the urgency of the need for minority teachers, 2) the size and complexity of the four partners involved, 3) the characteristics of the minority teacher candidates, and 4) the availability of support resources. To begin a recruitment project, a basic staff should consist of a coordinator and at least two support staff.

However, no staff, whatever its size, can begin to work until representatives from the four partners meet and decide on ways of meaningful collaboration, commit to hiring and supporting a coordinator and staff, and agree to be an ongoing advisory group that meets regularly with the coordinator to offer assistance, monitor progress, and evaluate the project. Once the advisory group has made these decisions, it can announce the goals of the project, begin to solicit applications for participants in the project, and invite applications for the coordinator's position.

The Role of the Program Coordinator

The coordinator of a minority teacher recruitment program must have some special qualifications, the most important of which is the ability to work effectively with all four of the collaborative partners: community groups, the school district, the university, and teachers. Also, the coordinator must be able to relate comfortably to all the participants in the program. In selecting a program coordinator, consideration should be given to the following qualifications:

- Recognized as an outstanding public school classroom teacher who is committed to the profession;
- Experience in designing and implementing student extracurricular activities, teacher inservice programs, and curriculum/instructional programs;
- Familiarity with the university teacher education program, possibly as a faculty member, as an advanced degree candidate, or as a participant in joint university/school district projects;
- Awareness of the professional literature about minority teacher shortages and related matters.
- Knowledge of community groups and individuals and willingness to expand these contacts;
- Demonstrated ability and/or willingness to secure outside funding sources; and
- Understanding of the issues and personal concerns of the student participants in the program. Maturity and experience are a must for dealing with many of their personal problems.

Some Final Considerations

The collaborative framework presented here for planning and implementing a minority teacher recruitment program is flexible and easily adaptable to the needs and the resources of different types of communities. The key to success is creating an atmosphere that ensures cooperation among all the partners in the process. As you think through your approach to minority teacher recruitment, we offer the following recommendations based on our experience in Jefferson County and from study of other programs described in the literature:

1. Jump in! School districts and universities can ill afford to wait until they have every detail planned and all the resources in place for a comprehensive program. Projects of this nature have to be developmental; those who participate in the initial design and implementation of a program will learn all that needs to be done (and what can be done) by doing it.

2. Secure front-end commitment and support from individuals who make budget decisions (that is, deans, superintendents, and university presidents). Even if the initial budgetary outlays are modest, commitments from these individuals are essential.

3. Be aware that the current pool of minority teaching candidates is woefully inadequate. Do not expect short-term solutions for the minority teacher shortage problem. The ultimate solution is enlarging the pool of minority candidates. This will require aggressive action and creative programs, starting in middle school, then high school, and finally earning a college degree and meeting certification requirements.

4. Be aware that first-generation college students are the most likely to choose teaching as a career.

5. Enlist the assistance of minority teachers in the planning, development, and implementation of the project. Provide them with information about the problem and invite their input as to possible solutions.

6. Remain flexible. Be open to opportunities that present themselves. Entertain different solutions to the same problem. Remember, there is no one "best" way to deal with the problem.

7. Evaluate your program. Establish timelines for evaluating your progress and re-direct your efforts if the need arises. Remember, however, the minority teacher shortage problem did not develop overnight and will not be solved overnight. Give your project enough time to work out any problems before you totally revamp.

8. Share your successes and failures with others at conferences, in professional journals, and in the mass media. Let them know what works and what doesn't work.

The number of minority teachers needed even to approach parity with the number of minority students is immense. Our schools no longer can operate with a "business as usual" attitude. One obvious problem is that many black students who might well become good teachers are not going to college; in fact, many are dropping out in high school.

Teaching traditionally has been the career choice of many first-generation college students. As we project the need for minority teachers over the next 20 years, we must make sure that larger numbers of minority students become first-generation college students. Beyond that, we must reconsider some of our testing and tracking practices and ensure that minority students receive the kind of education that encourages them to continue study beyond high school and provides them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for success as productive citizens in our nation.

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